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THE TURKS OF CENTRAL ASIA.

The Turks of Central Asia in History and at the Present Day: An Ethnological Inquiry into the Pan-Turanian Problem, and Bibliographical Material relating to the Early Turks and the Present Turks of Central Asia. By M. A. Czaplicka. Pp. 242. (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1918.) Price 15s. net.

THIS small and closely packed book deals with a big and intricate subject which can be dealt with satisfactorily only on a much larger scale, and it is to be hoped that its talented and learned author will presently give us a larger monograph in which the earlier history of the Turks, with its dramatic ties with the fortunes of Asia and Europe, will be told in much greater detail. It is opportune that such a book should appear when the greatest and most powerful empire established by the Turkish race is passing away, and when the thoughts of many of us are turning with a good deal of interest to the period in its history when the race emerged from the prehistoric age and began its wider sphere of interest. It is not possible in the space which NATURE can spare to do more than give a bare outline of the subject.

The Nomadic peoples who occupy the great stretch of grassy steppes, barren lands, and stony plateaus of Asia from the River Ural to the Yellow Sea form a group which is closely united by physical ties and by language. Their speech, although mutually unintelligible, has a common grammatical structure and a large number of common words. They are divisible into two main branches, respectively known to the Chinese as the Eastern and Western barbarians. Each of these divisions is again separable into two sections, one of them including the Mongols properly so-called, and the Tungus, better known in the West from one of their tribes as Manchus, and occupying the eastern part of Central Asia, of which the great desert of Gobi and its borders form the kernel. The other section, comprising the Turks and Finns (each divided into various tribes), occupies the country west of Mongolia, and is grouped about the great mountain chains of the Urals and the Altai Mountains, and is often spoken of as the Uralo-Altaic section of the human family.

At the time when history first notices this group, they were probably nearly as much separated as they are now, the great distinguishing feature which separates these two branches being that, while the Finnish branch were at that time almost entirely hunters and fishermen, the Turks have always been nomad herdsmen, having been occupied chiefly with the rearing of cattle, horses, and camels.

In their early days one section of the Turks formed the "frontagers" of the Aryan peoples, who lived in the Persian provinces of Khorasan, Balkh, and Transoxiana, which they continually

worried and attacked. The two lands, that of the nomads and that of the settled people, were respectively known to the Persian writers as Turan and Iran. This Western section is generally known as the Western Turks, and was perhaps the only portion of the stock specifically called Turks at that time.

Another great section occupied the frontiers of China and the greater part of what is now known as Mongolia, and in the earliest Chinese writers are known as *Hiong Nu*, or *Hiun Nu*. The *Hiong Nu* formed a very powerful empire, which fought on equal terms with China, and was a serious menace to the latter empire during the Chinese dynasties of the earlier and later Han. The power of the *Hiong Nu* was gradually sapped in their struggles with the Chinese, and they were eventually attacked and conquered by their Eastern neighbours, known to the Chinese as *Yuan Yuan*, who thus became the masters of all Nomadic Tartary, and were probably nearly related to the later Mongols. I argued in former years that they were identical with the *Avars* of the European writers, who appear in the West at the time when the power of the *Hiong Nu* was destroyed.

Presently, in the sixth century, the *Yuan Yuan* were themselves conquered and replaced by the true Turks, who then appear *eo nomine* for the first time in the Chinese annals. The Chinese, not having the letter "r" in their alphabet, represented the name "Turk" by that of *Thukiu*. These Turks were, I feel sure, the Western branch of the race above named. They in turn became the masters of all Tartary, and eventually were divided into two sections, a Western branch and an Eastern, the latter being in a large measure the descendants of the *Hiong Nu* above named.

It is with the advent of these true Turks into Mongolia that we first meet with signs of a settled community there, marked by many traces of civilisation, which are clearly traceable to the Iranian lands from the borders of which these Turks came. Among these the most notable relics are the remains of towns, and the existence of inscriptions, proving their knowledge of letters. They have left us a number of most interesting inscriptions, which have been studied and illuminated by several notable scholars. The names of the rulers mentioned on these inscriptions are also found in the Chinese annals, and are attributed by them to the *Thukiu*. We can therefore date them with the greatest precision. They are written in the well-known and widely spread Syriac script known as *estranghelo*, in which the Nestorian inscriptions of China were written, and which was afterwards used by the Uighur Turks and the Mongols for their writings. The capital of these early Turks was in Northern Mongolia, and, as stated above, they have left large traces there of their settlements.

Presently it would seem that the earlier Turks who lived in the East and had been known as *Hiong Nu* reasserted themselves and conquered

and replaced the Turks just named, taking possession of their settlements and capital, and continuing their culture. They also adopted the new name of Uighurs, which the Chinese, having, as I have said, no letter "r," changed into Hoi Hoi and other distorted forms of the name Uighur.

These Uighurs became a highly cultivated people, with a considerable literature, which is still extant, and their dialect is known as Eastern Turki. They apparently inherited from the Western Turks an attachment for the Iranian or Zoroastrian religion, and traces of the Zoroastrian gods and ritual are found among their remains. On other sides their religion was affected by missionaries from other sources. Manicheism found numerous recruits among them, and we are now fast recovering from the buried cities of Eastern Turkestan most interesting remains of the religion of Manes, while the Nestorian clergy founded episcopal sees in their country, and made numerous recruits. Presently, and in the seventh century, Buddhism also made its way among them in the corrupt form, and mixed with the Tantra superstitions, which then prevailed in Tibet, and is known as Red Lamaism in contrast with the reformed Lamaism of the later Yellow Lamas.

At length, in the ninth century, the religion of Islam found its way into Central Asia, being disseminated from the Central Asiatic State governed by the Samanids, and the Western Turks became eager converts to it both in the frontier steppes of the Persian Empire and in Eastern Turkestan. The Eastern Turks or Uighurs continued to be the more cultivated of the race, but the Western were the more powerful warriors, and under the name of Turcomans overran Persia and Asia Minor, founding the famous empire of the Seljuks, which was presently (in the thirteenth century) overwhelmed by the Mongols.

I am conscious of the extremely meagre and arid nature of this epitome, and how little it does justice to the wide reading and sound judgment of the author. No one knows it better, for I have spent a large part of my life in writing four fat volumes on the Mongols, and two sets of papers on the westerly drifting of Nomads and the northern frontagers of China in the old Ethnological Society's Journal and the Asiatic Journal respectively. This may give me at least a claim to speak in terms of high praise of the work before me, in which the author, having the unusual advantage of knowing Russian, has employed it with generous profusion, much to our profit, and in which she describes with clearness the various divisions into which the Turks have been disintegrated, with their geographical, ethnographical, and religious features, and also tells the story of their doings. It is so well done that I cannot pay the book a greater compliment than to repeat my invitation to the learned lady who has written it to give us a much larger work on the subject. I may add that a most ample bibliography occupies 114 of the 242 pages comprised in the work.

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THE LIVING PLANT.

Botany of the Living Plant. By Prof. F. O. Bower. Pp. x+580. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1919.) Price 25s. net.

A GOOD deal of discussion has recently taken place among botanists on the subject of the reconstruction of elementary botanical teaching, and one of the main contentions of the originators of the discussion was that in order to secure improvement "comparative morphology should be reduced to a subordinate position." It has further been alleged that in modern botanical teaching the teacher has failed to present the plant as a living organism, thereby implying that morphology has been divorced from physiology. Prof. F. O. Bower has already expressed himself forcibly and with sound sense upon the question in the pages of the *New Phytologist* (vol. xvii., Nos. 5 and 6, p. 105), and has aptly summarised his views with the adage, "Physician, heal thyself."

In his book now under notice he has given so admirable a presentment of the plant as a living organism that instead of there being any antagonism between physiology and morphology, their fusion and interdependence are so impressed on the reader that he can see, not two entities, but "one flesh."

Prof. Bower concludes the article to which reference has been made with the following: "Finally, each teacher with a due sense of his responsibility, and of his opportunities and requirements, must form his own scheme to meet his own needs. If he cannot do this he is not fit for his position."

Prof. Bower has followed this very pertinent criticism with his book, "The Botany of the Living Plant," which is framed on the lines of the annual course of elementary lectures on botany given by him at Glasgow for more than thirty years. His main object has been to present the plant as a living, growing, self-nourishing, self-adapting creature, and he has very finely achieved his ideal.

In his method of treatment of the subject he has allowed the living plant to tell its own story, slowly and naturally unfolding itself stage by stage in such a manner that interest is aroused and observation stimulated. The book may very justly be regarded as an invaluable contribution to sound learning. It does not aim at being an exhaustive treatise, but deals with the fundamental facts of plant life, and is written in a remarkably clear style, so much so that anyone with only a slight acquaintance with plant life should be able to acquire a real knowledge of the science of botany from a careful study of these essays.

The opening chapter is occupied by a careful and comprehensive description of the seed and its germination. It is sometimes considered more reasonable to commence the study of botany with the lower forms of plant life, but it is obviously a better plan to set out with a familiar and easily handled object, such as the seed, which marks a